

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ORM-02 DHA-02 IO-13 SCA-01 /086 W

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R 090400Z OCT 76

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2333

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

S E C R E T HONG KONG 11867

E.O. 11762 XGDS-2

TAGS: SREF, VS, CH, HK

SUBJECT: PRC TANKER PICKS UP VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

1. A HONG KONG GOVERNMENT SOURCE INFORMED CONGENOFF THAT A PRC-FLAG TANKER MANAGED BY A PRC COMPANY IN HONG KONG EN ROUTE FROM IRAN TO PORT IN SOUTERN KWANGTUNG PICKED UP SEVERAL VIETNAMESE REFUGEES. SOME OF THE REFUGEES WERE DESCRIBED AS "MILITARY". (IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THIS MEANT FORMER ARVN SOLDIERS OR NVA DESERTERS.) THE SHIP IS SCHEDULED TO PROCEED TO HONG KONG NEXT.

2. HKG OFFICIALS BELIEVED PRC WOULD REMOVE REFUGEES FROM SHIP FOR INTERROGATION AND SPECULATED THAT IN VIEW POOR STATE OF VIETNAMESE-CHINESE RELATIONS, PRC MIGHT BE RELUCTANT TO RETURN REFUGEES TO VIETNAM. HE ADDED THE REFUGEES COULD CONCEIVABLY END UP QUIETLY APPEARING AT THE LO WU CHECK POINT BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA.

3. COMMENT: WE AGREE IT IS LIKELY THAT THE PRC WILL REMOVE THE REFUGEES FROM THE SHIP, BUT WE ARE NOT AS CONVINCED AS

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OUR SOURCE THAT THE PRC WILL BE UNWILLING TO TURN THEM OVER

TO THE VIETNAMESE AUTHOIRITIES. A THIRD POSSIBILITY IS THAT
THE CHINESE WILL SIMPLY REFUSE TO ALLOW THE REFUGEES TO
DISEMBAKR, LEAVING IT FOR THE SHIP'S NEXT PORT OF CALL,
HONG KONG, TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH THEM.
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NNN

Message Attributes

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